

We claim:

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1. A method for applying elastic to an absorbent garment comprising:  
moving one or more elastic strands at a predetermined speed in a first direction  
through an applicator comb having one or more slots, each slot corresponding to a  
respective elastic strand;

providing adhesive to the applicator comb at a predetermined temperature and  
flow rate;

depositing the adhesive onto the one or more elastic strands to form an adhesive  
coating around substantially the entire periphery of each of the one or more elastic  
strands;

applying the one or more elastic strands to a first sheet;

applying a second sheet onto the first sheet such that the one or more elastic  
strands are between the first sheet and the second sheet.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the adhesive does not contact the first sheet or  
the second sheet during the step of depositing.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more elastic strands form tummy  
elastics in the absorbent garment.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more elastic strands form waist  
elastics in the absorbent garment.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more elastic strands form gather  
elastics in the absorbent garment.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the second sheet is a folded-over and continuous  
portion of the first sheet.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

periodically discontinuing providing adhesive to the applicator comb for a  
predetermined amount of time; and

not depositing adhesive on the one or more elastic strands during the step of  
periodically discontinuing providing to thereby leave discrete portions of the elastic  
strands not coated with adhesive.

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8. The method of claim 7, further comprising pulling adhesive away from the one or more elastic strands during the step of periodically discontinuing providing.

9. The method of claim 7, further comprising:  
severing each of the one or more elastic strands in the discrete portions of the elastic strands not coated with adhesive after the strand has been applied to the first sheet.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the first and second sheet are joined to one another only by mutual adhesion to the adhesive coating.

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11. The method of claim 1, further comprising stretching the one or more elastic strands.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of stretching comprises stretching the one or more elastic strands to about 250% to about 400% of their unstretched length.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of stretching comprises stretching the one or more elastic strands to about 275% to about 375% of their unstretched length.

14. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of stretching comprises stretching the one or more elastic strands to about 300% to about 350% of their unstretched length.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of moving one or more elastic strands comprises moving one or more elastic strands having a denier of about 200 to about 2200.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of moving one or more elastic strands comprises moving one or more elastic strands having a denier of about 400 to about 2000.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of moving one or more elastic strands comprises moving one or more elastic strands having a denier of about 600 to about 1800.

18. An absorbent garment subassembly comprising:  
a first sheet;  
a second sheet;  
one or more elastic strands disposed between the first sheet and the second sheet;

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an adhesive coating disposed around substantially the entire periphery of each elastic strand along at least part of each elastic strand's length.

19. The absorbent garment subassembly of claim 18, wherein the first sheet and the second sheet are joined to one another only by the adhesive coating.

20. The absorbent garment subassembly of claim 18, wherein the absorbent garment subassembly is a standing leg gather assembly and the first sheet and the second sheet are continuous portions of a single folded sheet.

21. The absorbent garment subassembly of claim 18, wherein the absorbent garment subassembly is a chassis layer and the first sheet and the second sheet are continuous portions of a folded sheet.

22. The absorbent garment subassembly of claim 18, wherein the absorbent garment subassembly is a tummy elastic assembly.

23. The absorbent garment subassembly of claim 22, wherein the adhesive coating on each of the elastic strands is disposed proximal to each end of the tummy elastic assembly and not disposed in a central region there between, and the elastic strands are severed in the central region.

24. The garment of claim 18, wherein the adhesive coating is disposed on each elastic strand by immersing the elastic strands in an applicator comb containing melted adhesive and drawing the elastic strands through the applicator comb.

25. The article of claim 18 wherein at least some of the elastic strands are selected from the group consisting of rubber, spandex, elastic polymers, elastic film, elastic foam materials, elastic webbing, elastic netting, and scrim elastic.

26. An absorbent garment manufacturing system comprising:  
a first path for supplying a first layer of material;  
a second path for supplying a second layer of material;  
a third path for supplying one or more elastic strands;  
an applicator comb, disposed along the third path, for applying adhesive to the one or more elastic strands;

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wherein the elastic strands are in registration with the applicator comb so that the applicator comb provides adhesive directly onto the periphery of the elastic strands and the applicator comb does not directly deposit a substantial amount of adhesive on the first layer of material or the second layer of material or onto other parts of the absorbent garment manufacturing system.

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